

NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW MAY 2-31, 2013

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

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American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

MAY 31, 2013

Today's Top Stories

- 1.The Ivoirian supreme court rules on the results of parliamentary elections, nullifies results in Anyama, confirms verdict in Yopougon
- 2.Ivoirian authorities tighten security measures amidst Islamist threats
- 3.President Ouattara to attend TICAD
- 4.The AfDB to return to its Abidjan headquarters, the bank's officials confirm

1.The Ivoirian supreme court rules on the results of parliamentary elections, nullifies results in Anyama, confirms verdict in Yopougon

The Supreme Court upheld yesterday most of the results of last month's parliamentary elections after rejecting claims submitted by some defeated candidates. The information was reported by *Fraternite Matin* (p. 9) which noted however that the court said the results in Anyama were not valid. Officials from the court would not comment on the case, but according to insiders the decision was rendered after evidence showed that the proclaimed winner had violated the law by using pictures of President Ouattara during his campaign. The court postponed its ruling on results in the Guemon and Cavally regions as well as in Adjame, Issai and Bouake but confirmed the verdict in Yopougon, the paper added.

The Supreme Court's decisions were diversely commented. According to *Nord Sud Quotidien* (p. 3) RDR Secretary General Amadou Soumahoro whose defeat was confirmed by the court said he accepted the court ruling. "We live in a state of law the court decisions must be honored...I accept the verdict," he reportedly said.

Papers close to the opposition and the former ruling FPI party, criticized the court's rulings. *Aujourd'hui* (p. 5) argued that the court deliberately avoided high-profile cases like Koumassi and

Treichville. Le Quotidien (p. 5) said the court decision was biased in Guitry, in south western Cote d'Ivoire where despite documented reports of fraud, the initial verdict was upheld.

2. Ivoirian authorities tighten security measures amidst Islamist threats

According to an article in Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 4) jihadists have threatened to attack Cote d'Ivoire as they vowed to launch a retaliatory offensive against countries that support the military intervention in northern Mali. The threat, the paper said, is taken seriously by Ivoirian authorities who have reinforced security measures since then. Piloted by Interior Minister Hamed Bakayoko, the security scheme set up has paid off so far and allowed the arrest of suspects. Ivoirian military personnel have been mobilized and the situation in Mali is closely monitored, the paper added.

Still on homeland security, Fraternite Matin (p. 8) noted that the UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the Ivoirian military yesterday signed a cooperation agreement to better coordinate security monitoring efforts. The signing ceremony brought together Ivoirian Minister in charge of Defense Paul Koffi Koffi and UN Envoy in Cote d'Ivoire Bert Koenders. "We have to work together on the ground and to that end we need to be on the same wave length with the UN troops," the paper reported the Minister as saying. The UN envoy commended the move and announced a possible reduction of the UN force in Cote d'Ivoire.

3. President Ouattara to attend TICAD

President Ouattara and his wife are in Yokohama, Japan since yesterday where they are scheduled to attend the 5th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). The information was reported by Fraternite Matin (pp. 4-5) which noted that on the margin of the conference, the Ivoirian leader is to have talks with Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Japanese businessmen. According to the daily, the occasion will definitely be used to call on Japanese investments in a bid to rebuild Cote d'Ivoire's war-torn economy. TICAD is a summit meeting on African development co-organized by the Government of Japan, the UN, the World Bank, the UNDP and the AUC, the paper added.

4. The AfDB to return to its Abidjan headquarters, the bank's officials confirm

The African Development Bank or AfDB is to return to its Abidjan headquarters. The information was confirmed by officials from the bank on the margin of the pan-African institution's annual meeting being held in Morocco. L'Inter (p. 10) said the bank's board of governors has given the green light for its relocation to Abidjan. The AfDB was shifted to Tunis, Tunisia following the 2002 coup attempt that turned into a full-scaled rebellion. "The bank's return to Cote d'Ivoire is no more a myth...We now have a clear road map to work it out," the paper reported AfDB president Donald Kaberuka as saying.

International Stories on Cote d'Ivoire

[After war, Ivory Coast struggles with reconciliation process](#)

Yahoo! News-10 hours ago

Ivory Coast set up a truth and reconciliation commission after a brief civil war two years ago.

But rights activists say the new government is less ...

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

May 30, 2013

Today's Top Stories

- 1. Ivoirian opposition leader Koulibaly's declaration sparks controversy**
- 2. Ghanaian President speaks on extradition of supporters of former Ivoirian regime**
- 3. Disarmament of traditional hunters starts in Bouake**
- 4. American businessmen in Cote d'Ivoire seeking opportunities**

1. Ivoirian opposition leader Koulibaly's declaration sparks controversy

A recent pronouncement in foreign media by Ivoirian opposition leader Mamadou Koulibaly on the regime of the former Ivoirian president Laurent Gbagbo has triggered controversy in the press today. An article in **L'Inter (p. 4)** claims that there is no better eyewitness in Cote d'Ivoire other than the leader of the opposition LIDER party, Mamadou Koulibaly, who can talk about the deeds and misdeeds of the former Ivoirian president and his FPI party. The paper reports the opposition leader describing Mr. Gbagbo as "a pure agitator" when he called himself "anti-colonialist" during his tenure of power.

Mr. Koulibaly also features prominently in **Notre Voie (p. 2)** which accuses him of waging "a crusade" against the former Ivoirian leader who faces charges of crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court. The paper also sees Mr. Koulibaly's critics against Mr. Gbagbo as "ingratitude" on the part of a "finished" politician.

In a similar tone, **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 3)** publishes a statement in which one of Mr. Gbagbo's staunch supporters accuses Mr. Koulibaly, who was a leading member of the former ruling FPI party, of "plotting" against the former president who is standing trial in The Hague. **Aujourd'hui (pp. 6&7)**, a daily close to Gbagbo's FPI party, calls the leader of LIDER party "a disguised plotter" in search of "cheap political gains."

Le Jour Plus (p. 2) also tries to link Mr. Koulibaly's pronouncement to the trial of Mr. Gbagbo at The Hague, with a prominent headline claiming, "Koulibaly has sealed the fate of Gbagbo." But a leading member of the former ruling FPI, who reacted to Mr. Koulibaly's critics, is reported by **Soir Info (p. 5)** as saying, "We've no interest in Mamadou Koulibaly."

2. Ghanaian President speaks on extradition of supporters of former Ivoirian regime

Many Ivoirian dailies today report Ghanaian President John Dramani Mahama explaining the reasons behind Ghana's decision to hand over to Cote d'Ivoire key supporters of the former Ivoirian president

Laurent Gbagbo accused of being involved in crimes committed during the 2011 post-electoral crisis. According to **L'Inter (p. 3)**, the Ghanaian president, who was speaking yesterday in Paris, France, said, "We received from President Ouattara a list of wanted persons including Charles Ble Goude; and we extradited those whose implication was verified." On the fate of the Ivoirian refugees living in Ghana, President Mahama said, "They can stay in Ghana as long as they want on condition that they don't use Ghana as a launching pad to destabilize Cote d'Ivoire."

In the wake of President Mahama's statement, **La Matinale (p. 5)**, daily close to President Ouattara's RDR party, claims that Ghana is waging "war against coup plotters." The article also says that this statement from the Ghanaian leader is a strong signal to supporters of former president Laurent Gbagbo who continue planning to destabilize the regime of President Ouattara.

But an article in **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 2)** sees the reasons behind Ghana's decision to extradite Ivoirians as "blatant falsehoods."

3. Disarmament of traditional hunters starts in Bouake

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 9)** says the voluntary disarmament program of traditional hunters also known as Dozos has begun in the central city of Bouake. According to the paper, traditional hunters yesterday handed over guns including AK47s during an exercise organized by the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Authority (ADDR) with the backing of the UN mission in Cote d'Ivoire.

4. American businessmen in Cote d'Ivoire seeking opportunities

A report in **Notre Voie (p. 8)** says a group foreign investors including business operators from the United States are currently visiting Cote d'Ivoire to learn more about the country's economic environment. According to the paper, the delegation met with government officials including Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan.

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May 29, 2013

Today's Top Stories

1. Media reactions to Amnesty International report
2. West African prosecutors meeting over criminality in the region
3. Defense and security fair opens in Abidjan
4. Government seeks media and civil society's support to fight corruption
5. Head of state regulatory body announces closure of newspapers

1. Media reactions to Amnesty International report

A recent report by Amnesty International that documents the human rights situation in Cote d'Ivoire features prominently in the Ivoirian press today. The report notes among other things that there has been "recurrent insecurity" in Cote d'Ivoire due to attacks on military targets by unidentified gunmen, reports *Fraternite Matin* (p. 6). According to the paper, the report also talks about "arbitrary detention" in Cote d'Ivoire. "200 persons – including members of the FPI party – suspected to have threatened state security, have been illegally imprisoned; most of the time in unofficial detention places," the paper quotes head of Amnesty International in Cote d'Ivoire Kouakou Yao N'Guessan as saying yesterday at a press conference in Abidjan.

Reporting on the same report, *Aujourd'hui* (p. 4), a daily close to the former ruling FPI party, says Amnesty International has confirmed "torture" by President Alassane Ouattara's regime of prisoners close to the former Ivoirian president Laurent Gbagbo. This report is evidence that Cote d'Ivoire is engulfed in human rights violation, writes *Notre Voie* (p. 4), while *L'Expression* (p. 2), a daily close to the ruling RDR party, reports that Amnesty International has commended the Ivoirian authorities for their efforts to improve the human rights situation in this country.

2. West African prosecutors meeting over crimes in the region

A report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 6) says prosecutors from West African countries are meeting in Abidjan in a bid to find ways to curb criminal activity in the sub-region. The two-day conference which opened yesterday, reports the paper, will make recommendations aimed to fight cross border drug trafficking.

3. Defense and security fair opens in Abidjan

A report in *Nord-Sud Quotidien* (p. 4) quotes Ivoirian Interior and Security Minister Hamed Bakayoko as saying that the West African region has become a terrorism-prone region. Mr. Bakayoko, the paper says, was speaking yesterday in Abidjan at the launching of a defense and security fair organized by a private company. In the face of what the minister sees as "threats" from jihadist terrorist groups operating the sub-region, he called for "dynamic cooperation" among countries in order to fight the danger.

4. Government seeks media and civil society's support to fight corruption

The Ivoirian government is seeking to provide civil society organizations and the media with tools to enable them to lead the fight against corruption, reports *Fraternite Matin* (p. 27). As part of this initiative, the government office in charge of reinforcement of capacities for national governance has invited media practitioners and members of the civil society to come up with proposals aimed to fight corruption in Cote d'Ivoire. "There is still a long way to go to curb corruption in Cote d'Ivoire," the paper reports the head of the office in charge of reinforcement of capacities for national governance, Sindou Meite as saying at the opening of the seminar. Mr. Meite is also reported as saying that Cote d'Ivoire's efforts to become an emerging economy by the year 2020 will remain "futile without good governance, transparency, accountability and efficient mechanisms that punish corruption."

5. Head of state regulatory body announces closure of newspapers

Le Patriote (pp. 10&11) reports the head of the state National Press Council (CNP), a print media regulatory body, Raphael Lapke as saying, "By May 31, newspapers which do not comply with the law

on the print media in Cote d'Ivoire will be banned from publishing." Mr. Lakpe, who said this, in an interview with the paper says the CNP, will remain "inflexible" on this issue, as the law demands, among other things that the publishers respect "the collection convention."

1. [Watchdog: Most timber exported from Ghana illegal](#)

MiamiHerald.com-May 28, 2013

ABIDJAN, **Ivory Coast** -- New documents on logging permits in Ghana indicate most timber exported from the country is likely illegal, exposing ...

2. [Ivory Coast Lashes out at US State Dep't Report](#)

ABC News-May 28, 2013

Ivory Coast's government lashed out at the United States Embassy in Abidjan over a report citing restrictions on press freedom including the ...

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May 28, 2013

Today's Top Stories

1. **Ministry of Communication reacts to U.S. report on human rights in Cote d'Ivoire**
2. **Charles Ble Goude to be remanded in custody**
3. **ICC to recruit speakers of local Ivoirian languages**
4. **New scheme to ensure traceability of Ivoirian diamonds launched**
5. **Five West African states to build 6-lane highway from Lagos to Abidjan**

1. Minister of Communication reacts to U.S. report on human rights in Cote d'Ivoire

A reaction from the Minister of Communication to the 2012 U.S. Human Rights Report is one the major stories in the Ivoirian press today. ***Fraternite Matin (p. 10)***, publishes the full statement signed by the Minister of Communication, Affoussiata Bamba-Lamine, in which the Minister complains that the United States failed to permit the Government of Cote d'Ivoire to respond to the criticisms.

Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 5) also carries the statement with a prominent quote stating that the part of the report on freedom of expression is "not credible." "Freedom of expression is not a synonym of immunity and impunity," ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 2)*** quotes the statement as saying; while ***Le Mandat (p. 4)***, a daily close to the ruling RHDP coalition, quotes the minister's statement as urging the Embassy of the United States "not to encourage impunity."

2. Charles Ble Goude to be remanded in custody

A report in **L'Inter (p. 2)** suggests that former Ivoirian youth leader Charles Ble Goude, who was arrested and deported from Ghana to Cote d'Ivoire a few months ago, will have to remain in custody pending his trial. According to the report, a judge in the Ivoirian financial capital Abidjan has decided that Mr. Goude, who has been detained since January on charges of "war crimes, killings, breach to state security and embezzlement of public funds," should be remanded in custody.

Reporting on the new development, **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 5)** denounces what it describes as the "illegal" detention of the youth leader who is also a staunch supporter of former Ivoirian president Laurent Gbagbo.

3. ICC to recruit speakers of local Ivoirian languages

Reports suggesting that the International Criminal Court (ICC), which is hearing the case of the former Ivoirian president Laurent Gbagbo who is accused of "crimes against humanity", will be recruiting speakers of local Ivoirian languages have generated debate in the Ivoirian press. An article in **Soir Info (p. 4)** says the court is to hire translators who speak Dioula, Guere, Bete, More and Baoule, five local languages spoken in Cote d'Ivoire. The paper sees recruitment of these translators as a sign that the court could decide to continue the investigations into charges leveled against the former Ivoirian president.

The recruitment of local language translators, comments **L'Expression (p. 3)**, a daily close to the ruling RDR party, could lead to the postponement of the next hearing of the case involving Mr. Gbagbo to enable ICC's chief prosecutor to return to Cote d'Ivoire for more investigations.

In a related development, pro-opposition dailies reporting on the recent African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, say the organization has criticized the International Criminal Court for targeting only African leaders. **Notre Voie (p. 2)** quotes Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn who accused the ICC of organizing "a racial hunt for Africans," while a report in **Aujourd'hui (p. 7)**, a daily close to the former ruling FPI party, quotes Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir accusing the court of "terrorizing" African leaders.

Meanwhile, a report in **Nord-Sud Quotidien (pp. 4&5)** explains that charges that have been leveled against the African leaders were not fabricated by the ICC. The paper also quotes Ivoirian human rights campaigner Yacouba Doumbia who is dismayed by the position of African leaders on the role of the ICC.

4. New scheme to ensure traceability of Ivoirian diamonds launched

A report in **Soir Info (p. 12)** says the Ivoirian Ministry of Mining, Petrol and Energy and the Kimberly Process Permanent Secretariat in Cote d'Ivoire have jointly launched a scheme aimed to ensure the traceability of diamonds coming from Cote d'Ivoire. The move is designed to conform to the mechanisms put in place by the Kimberly process and to ensure "good governance" in diamond exploitation in Cote d'Ivoire, reports the paper. The scheme, the report also says, will lead to the lifting of the embargo imposed on Ivoirian diamonds by the UN.

5. Five West African states agree to build 6-lane highway from Lagos to Abidjan

A report in the Monday issue of ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 6)** says President Alassane Ouattara has agreed with four other West African neighbors to invest and expand the Lagos-Abidjan highway into a six-lane road to promote trade among other purposes. The leaders of the five countries - Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire - met on the sideline of the African Union Summit and agreed to commence the expansion project in 2014.

International Stories on Cote d'Ivoire

1. Cocoa Falls to One-Week Low on Ivory Coast Rains; Sugar Advances

Bloomberg-May 24, 2013

Cocoa fell to a one-week low in London on speculation rainfall in top grower *Ivory Coast* will boost prospects for the crop. Sugar advanced and ...

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MAY 24, 2013

Today's Top Stories

- 1. ICC prosecutor confirms trial of former president Laurent Gbagbo**
- 2. PDCI president rejects the idea of an alliance with the FPI**
- 3. Former deputy director picked as head of the RTI**
- 4. Ivoirian and Ghanaian authorities open border information center**

1. ICC prosecutor confirms trial of former president Laurent Gbagbo

According to the prosecutor from the International Criminal Court (ICC) Fatou Bensouda, the court has gathered enough evidence against former president Laurent Gbagbo for him to be tried. The information is reported in ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 7)** which notes that the former president, under custody at The Hague-based court, is still awaiting final confirmation of charges against him. "We have a very strong case," the paper reports Mrs. Bensouda as saying. The former Ivoirian president is accused of human rights violations and war crimes during the political crisis that arose after he refused to cede power after losing the 2010 presidential election.

Opposition paper ***Le Nouveau Courrier* (p. 5)**, reports the move as blatant bias. According to the daily, Bensouda has confessed herself that there is a policy of retaliation presently going on in Cote d'Ivoire.

2. PDCI president rejects the idea of an alliance with the FPI

Speaking yesterday at a meeting of his party, the president of PDCI, former Ivoirian president Henri Konan Bedie, said that an alliance with the FPI is not going to happen. According to **Le Nouveau Reveil (pp. 5-6)**, Bedie gives no credit to the calls by the FPI for an alliance with the PDCI. "The FPI has a long history of violence it still drags as a millstone," the paper reported Bedie as saying, arguing that the two parties have different ideologies. He also used the occasion to call on the RHDP ruling coalition to overcome recent dissention within its ranks in order to support reconciliation and reconstruction efforts.

L'Inter (p. 2) carried a similar account, adding that according to Bedie, former president Gbagbo was a "tyrant" that the RHDP was able to defeat thanks to its unity.

3. Former deputy director picked as head of the RTI

Appointed recently as the chairman of the board of directors of a newly-created government agency in charge of radio frequencies, Agence Ivoirienne de Gestion des Fréquences (AIGF), Mr. Lazare Aka Saye was officially replaced yesterday as the managing director of the government-run television channel RTI. The information was reported by **Fraternite Matin (p. 27)** which notes that Aka Saye was replaced by Ahmadou Bakayoko who has been his deputy since 2012.

4. Ivoirian and Ghanaian authorities open border information center

In a bid to facilitate trade between the two countries, Ivoirian and Ghanaian authorities opened yesterday border information centers in Noe, on the Ivoirian side of the border, and in Elubo in Ghana. The information was reported by **L'Inter (p. 10)** which notes that the initiative was piloted by the USAID Trade Hub in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In his address, U.S. Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire Phillip Carter III said delays and costs of doing business in West Africa are serious impediments to the region's economic growth and development. "Delays at borders and the costs incurred prevent businesses from expanding and as a result, businesses are unable to create jobs that reduce poverty. The new Border Information Centers will directly address both these issues," the paper reported Ambassador Carter as saying.

International Stories on Cote d'Ivoire

1. Rape Plagues Ivory Coast Long After Conflict's End

Voice of America

BOUAKE, **IVORY COAST** — Two years since **Ivory Coast's** post-election violence came to an end, rape remains a problem throughout the country. Though such attacks are now occurring outside the context of armed conflict, they show that the security

2. UK, France to Join Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

Wall Street Journal

Also this week, the EITI declared Togo as compliant, accepted **Ivory Coast** as compliant, and accepted Honduras and the Philippines as candidates to its principles. The U.K. was instrumental in creating the initiative, according to the EITI statement ...

3. Cote d'Ivoire needs help to rebound

The South Florida Times

In April 2012, as my plane began its approach to the Abidjan airport, in the former capital of Cote

d'Ivoire or the **Ivory Coast** and the country's largest city – the official capital is Yamoussoukro – I wondered what I would find. The airport had ...

4. [Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire most vibrant economies in sub-region – US ...](#)

GhanaWeb

The US Ambassador to Ghana, Gene A. Cretz, has identified Ghana and **Côte d'Ivoire** as two of West Africa's most vibrant and important ...

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

May 23, 2013

Today's Top Stories

1. **Ivoirian government to resume dialogue with former ruling party**
2. **Gunmen attack police station in eastern Cote d'Ivoire**
3. **Cote d'Ivoire qualifies for Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative**
4. **Ivoirian and Australian firms in a joint venture for gold production**
5. **China firm to start railway construction in Cote d'Ivoire**
6. **West African experts meeting over power production in the region**
7. **To keep the country clean, Ivoirian government to ban plastic bags**

1. Ivoirian government to resume dialogue with former ruling party

Fraternite Matin (p. 11) reports that the dialogue between the government and Ivoirian opposition groups will resume by June of this year. According to the paper, Ivoirian Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan made the announcement yesterday during a cabinet meeting in Abidjan. The move, the paper quotes the prime minister as saying, is part of a, "political dialogue that brings together the government and 11 political parties," including the FPI party of former president Laurent Gbagbo.

Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 2), which reports on the same issue, claims that the government's decision to resume dialogue with opposition groups was the result of pressure from the international community. The article also suggests that the recent U.S. report on the human rights situation in Cote d'Ivoire has been a major factor in this decision. In making this decision, comments the paper, the government may have decided to make some concessions on discussions relating to reforms wanted by the opposition in a bid to boost the reconciliation process in the country.

2. Gunmen attack police station in eastern Cote d'Ivoire

One assailant was killed and a policeman wounded in Abengourou, in eastern Cote d'Ivoire, after gunmen raided a police station and an army camp, reports **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 2)**. The report also says that two assailants were arrested while others were able to make away with guns stolen from the police station.

3. Cote d'Ivoire qualifies for Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

A report in **L'Inter (p. 11)** says Cote d'Ivoire has qualified for the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). According to the paper, the announcement was made yesterday in Sydney, Australia during a meeting of the board of the governors of the program. EITI is a system through which governments reaffirm their commitment to accountability and transparency for their country's oil, gas, and mining industries. The article also says that Cote d'Ivoire's qualification for this initiative is the result of efforts made by the Ivoirian government to put in place better mechanisms for monitoring these industries.

4. Ivoirian and Australian firms in a joint venture for gold production

An Australian firm will inject some US \$3.6 million into gold production in Cote d'Ivoire, says a report in **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 4)**. According to the paper, an agreement was signed Tuesday in Abidjan between the Australian firm and an Ivoirian company for gold production in Sakassou, in central Cote d'Ivoire. The report also says that the program, which will run from five to seven years, will generate 10 percent returns to the government of Cote d'Ivoire.

5. China firm to start railway construction in Cote d'Ivoire

A report in **La Matinale (p. 3)**, a daily close to the government, says the China Railway Corporation will soon launch a railway construction project that will connect the port city of San Pedro, in southwestern Cote d'Ivoire, to the town of Man, located in the west close to Liberia. According to the paper, the 300 kilometer line will cost FCFA 750 billion (about US \$1.5 billion) and will facilitate the transport of raw materials and other products from the west to other regions.

6. West African experts meeting over power production in the region

Experts from West African countries are meeting in the Ivoirian political capital of Yamoussoukro this week in a bid to find ways to boost power production in the sub-region, reports **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 7)**. The two-day meeting, which opened yesterday, will evaluate projects aimed at expanding the electricity connection between the member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In some of the member countries, power distribution in rural areas is below 10 percent.

7. To keep the country clean, Ivoirian government to ban plastic bags

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 4)** says the government yesterday adopted a bill aimed at banning the production, importation and commercialization of plastic bags in Cote d'Ivoire. The move, according to the paper, is to protect the environment by curbing the negative impact of waste produced through the use of these bags on the population. Another article in this paper **(p. 9)** describes plastic bags as the major source of pollution in Cote d'Ivoire, representing 12 percent of the total waste produced daily in Abidjan.

International Stories on Cote d'Ivoire

1. [Ivory Coast Power Utility Plans Exports as Recovery Spurs Profit](#)
Businessweek

Ivory Coast's capacity is 1,421 megawatts, which will rise by 100 megawatts by the end of the month when Glasgow-based Aggreko Plc (AGK)'s power plant in Abidjan boosts capacity, Stephan Dauriac, Cie Ivoirienne d'Electricite's deputy director-general ...

[2. IFC to help build investor confidence in Ivory Coast](#)

Ghana Business News

Businesses The International Finance Corporation (IFC) has signed an agreement to support better investment climate for business growth in Ivory Coast. The country suffered a major setback in its business environment after it went into a political ...

[3. Underinvestment sees blackouts in Ivory Coast](#)

ESI Africa

With shortages rippling across to Togo, Benin, Mali, Ghana and Burkina Faso – all of whom feed off Ivory Coast's grid – urban youths across the region are turning to social media to vent their frustrations as infrastructure creaks beneath a rapidly ...

[4. Grand Gedeans Plan Mass Demonstration - to Demand Trial of Detained Kinsmen](#)

AllAfrica.com

Several bullets disgorged from the nozzles of rustic guns near an Ivorian border town close to Liberia and the casualties were seven peace-keepers of the Nigerien Contingent of the United Nations Observatory Mission in Ivory Coast along with four ...

[5. Amnesty Report Highlights Refugee Plight](#)

Voice of America

The crisis is particularly acute in Africa - in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Sudan and South Sudan. But aside from the human rights violations that forced people to flee their homes, Amnesty also criticizes countries that receive

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

MAY 22, 2013

Today's Top Stories

- 1.State regulatory body suspends pro-opposition, satirical newspaper
- 2.Human Rights Watch on President Ouattara's two year in power
- 3.Ivoirian forces trained on human rights and international laws

1. State regulatory body suspends pro-opposition, satirical newspaper

An article in Notre Voie (p. 9) says that the government print media regulatory body, Conseil National de la Presse (CNP), has suspended Bol'Kotch, a weekly, satirical newspaper close to the former ruling FPI party. The newspaper, the report says, has been suspended for eight publications – two months – following an article carried in its latest issue with headline reading, "Magellan is already in campaign/sale of nationality at Mossikro." The report quotes the CNP as saying that the headline is a,

"violation to the media laws and a breach of the media code of ethics in Cote d'Ivoire." The report also notes that this is the third time that Bol'Kotch has been suspended since March 2012. The suspension of the paper also features prominently in Le Quotidien d'Abidjan (p. 2).

In another media-related story, an article in L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 3) quotes the leader of an Ivoirian opposition party, Mamadou Koulibaly of LIDER, as accusing the government-run television station, RTI, of being "biased." The paper says the LIDER party claims that the broadcaster gives airtime only to members of the government in violation of the law that provides for equal access to all parties.

Another article on the same page of L'Intelligent d'Abidjan says that the board of directors of RTI is scheduled to meet today to appoint a new managing director for the government broadcaster following the nomination of outgoing director Lazare Aka Saye to the leadership of a newly-developed government agency overseeing radio frequencies.

2. Human Rights Watch on President Ouattara's two years in power

A recent document published by Human Rights Watch (HRW) on the human rights situation in Cote d'Ivoire, two years after President Alassane Ouattara assumed power, generates mixed reactions in the press today. A report in L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (pp. 6-7) quotes the document as commending authorities in Cote d'Ivoire for their, "significant efforts to restore the country's devastated economy and infrastructure as a result of conflicts and mismanagement." At the same time, the paper says that the document adds, "However, the lack of impartial justice and efforts to resolve causes that were behind recent crisis could jeopardize efforts to achieve a long-term stability and development."

A report in Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 5) also says that the HRW report decries the lack of "partiality" in efforts by the government to tackle the main causes of the recent political and military conflicts in Cote d'Ivoire.

Notre Voie (p. 4) carries another document published by HRW in reaction to the Ivoirian government's position on their initial report. "Impunity for criminals close to Ouattara: Human Rights Watch contradicts the government," writes the paper which publishes the full document. Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 2) reports on the same document which underscores the government's commitment to follow recommendations made by HRW in their report.

3. Ivoirian forces trained on human rights and international laws

A report in Fraternite Matin (p. 8) says the Ivoirian chief of defense staff, General Soumaila Bakayoko, has emphasized the importance for military personnel to know about human rights and international laws in the course of their duties. "Any Ivoirian soldier who does not have a minimum knowledge about human rights and international laws will not be nominated for any assignment outside Cote d'Ivoire," General Bakayoko is reported as saying yesterday during a session aimed to train soldiers on human rights issues.

1. [Focus on politics problems would help Ivory Coast recovery](#)
UPI.com

Ivory Coast was pushed to the brink of civil war following competing claims of victory in 2010

presidential elections. Defeated candidate Laurent Gbagbo was captured with the help of French peacekeepers in 2011. He's awaiting trial for war crimes at ...

2. ['A turning point for justice in Africa'](#)

Legalbrief (subscription)

At the same time, notes Legalbrief, Ivory Coast authorities have arrested a militia leader suspected of a role in one of the worst massacres during 2011 post-election violence. There is keen interest in this breakthrough because former President ...

[See all stories on this topic »](#)

3. [Appy birthdays](#)

The Economist (blog)

CÔTE D'IVOIRE may be one of the few places where birther conspiracies run hotter than in America. For decades, opponents of the president,

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

MAY 21, 2013

Today's Top Stories

1. Media react to the arrest of renegade fighter
2. Army reform: Ivoirian army officers trained in Ghana
1. Media react to the arrest of renegade fighter

The arrest over the weekend of militia leader Amade Oueremi continues to be reported and commented on in the press today. According to *Fraternite Matin* (pp. 6-9) the renegade fighter who had been occupying the Mont Peko forest in western Cote d'Ivoire for more than a decade did not confront soldiers sent to capture him. "There was no confrontation or any other combat operation during his capture," Ivoirian Minister in charge of Defense Paul Koffi Koffi said, saying that the wanted man turned himself in after his makeshift headquarters was besieged by the Ivoirian army.

Oueremi's arrest was welcomed both by pro-government and opposition papers. In a statement made yesterday, *L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 2) noted that LIDER's President Mamadou Koulibaly commended Ivoirian President Alassane Ouattara for the move and called on the Ivoirian government to go beyond Oueremi's case. According to Koulibaly, other criminals of this kind are still acting with impunity. He adds that in order to achieve national reconciliation and security, the government must ensure all those accused of crimes, violations of the law and embezzlement are brought to justice.

Still on the issue, the paper (p. 2) notes that Florent Geel, African director of International Federation for Human Rights, says Oueremi's arrest is just a first step that calls for similar actions. "Oueremi is a warlord who joined the FRCI during the war. He is said to have played a major role in what was termed, 'the massacre of Duekoue,' which claimed the lives of 500 to 800 people. His arrest is

therefore a good stride toward justice.” The paper reports that Geel adds that Oueremi could not have acted alone and must therefore not be the only one brought to justice.

According to Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 3), interim secretary general of the former ruling FPI party, Richard Kodjo, argues Oueremi’s arrest is not likely to put an end to the crimes that warlords have been engaged in within the country’s forested areas. “All of them need to get out of our forests,” he says.

Finally, Le Quotidien d’Abidjan (p. 6) alleges that Oueremi’s arrest stems from a deal between President Ouattara and his Burkina Faso counterpart Blaise Compaore.

2. Army reform: Ivoirian army officers trained in Ghana

According to a report in Fraternite Matin (p. 10), 15 officers from the Ivoirian military were recently trained on leadership tenets and negotiation techniques at the Kofi Annan Center in Accra, Ghana. The four-day capacity building session, organized by the United Nations Operation in Cote d’Ivoire (UNOCI), was held as part of efforts to revamp the Ivoirian security and defense sectors. The training was also meant to foster relationship between the two neighboring countries, the paper added.

International Stories on Cote d’Ivoire

1. [Obama to take first major Africa trip in late June](#)

AFP

In 2011, Obama received four other African leaders at the White House, the presidents of Benin, Guinea, Niger and Ivory Coast. He had promised them the US would remain a "stalwart partner" to democracies in Africa. In June 2012, Obama unveiled a ...

2. [Improving rains boost optimism for strong I.Coast cocoa - Business Recorder](#)

Business Recorder (blog)

ABIDJAN: Increased rainfall and abundant sunshine across most of Ivory Coast's main growing regions have increased optimism among growers following a turbulent start to mid-crop harvesting, farmers and analysts said on Monday. While the majority of ...

3. [Ivory Coast's reconciliation under threat from victor's justice - video](#)

The Guardian

Atrocities were committed on both sides during Ivory Coast's post-election conflict two years ago, in which more than 3,000 people died. But while former president Laurent Gbagbo awaits a potential war crimes trial at the Hague, not a single person has ...

4. [Côte d'Ivoire: 2 Years in, Uneven Progress](#)

Human Rights Watch

(Nairobi) – Côte d'Ivoire's government has made little progress in addressing root causes of the country's decade of politico-military violence in ...

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

May 17, 2013

Today's Top Stories

1. U.S.-sponsored legislative strengthening program launched with National Assembly of Cote d'Ivoire
2. Ivoirian army tracking down renegade fighter in western Cote d'Ivoire
3. NGOs call for the resignation of the head of the reconciliation commission
4. Seven wounded after fighting between rival student factions
5. Channel 2 of state broadcaster now available nationwide

1. U.S.-sponsored legislative strengthening program launched with National Assembly of Cote d'Ivoire

The launching yesterday of a new U.S.-funded project to reinforce the capability of members of the Ivoirian National Assembly to be more responsive to the citizens they serve is the one of the major issues in the press today. A report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 8) says the five-year program will assist the National Assembly deputies to become more effective in meeting their responsibilities in law-making, internal management, government oversight and constituent representation. They add that the program will cost US \$13.5 million. Speaking at the launching ceremony, Speaker of the National Assembly Guillaume Soro hailed the U.S. government for its support "to entrench democracy" in Cote d'Ivoire after the disputed 2010 presidential election. The paper also reports Ambassador Phillip Carter III as saying that the program will, "help the state establish its authority and good governance" in areas such as security and public services while helping to, "create conditions for economic recovery."

Reporting on the event, *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 5) says the U.S. Embassy donated more than 400 smartphones to Ivoirian lawmakers. A report in *L'Expression* (p. 5), a daily close to the government, quotes Assembly President Soro as saying, "Without the American government, 2012 would have been a difficult year" in Cote d'Ivoire. "Cote d'Ivoire must have institutions that function," a report in *Le Nouveau Courrier* (p. 4) quotes U.S. Ambassador Carter as saying. "You must hold the government accountable," *Le Mandat* (p. 5), a daily close to the government, quotes the Ambassador as telling the lawmakers.

In a related story, a report in *Le Quotidien d'Abidjan* (p. 6), a daily close to the former ruling FPI party, says the Ivoirian government is seeking the support of the United States to implement its free medical care program. According to the paper, the issue was addressed Monday in Abidjan during a meeting between Ambassador Carter and Ivoirian Minister of Health and the Fight against HIV Raymonde Goudou.

2. Ivoirian army tracking down renegade fighter in western Cote d'Ivoire

A report in L'Inter (p. 6) says the Ivoirian army has launched a vast operation aimed to track down Amade Oueremi, a renegade fighter who has settled in western Cote d'Ivoire. The report says a contingent of hundreds of government soldiers, part of the Forces Republicaines de Cote d'Ivoire (FRCI), as well as gendarmes, have been deployed to the region for this operation.

According to Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 3), the military operation launched yesterday. The report also says that an attempt by the previous government to clean the forest reserve in the west was futile as the renegade fighter and his men are heavily armed.

An article in Notre Voie (p. 2) wonders whether Ivoirian soldiers, backed by their French counterparts, will be able to dislodge Oueremi from the Peko forest reserve where he is in hiding. The article also claims that Oueremi is from Burkina Faso and that he is accused of killing two people on Tuesday after his motorcade hit them in Duekoue.

3. NGOs call for the resignation of the head of the reconciliation commission

A report in L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 7) says Ivoirian NGOs are calling for the resignation of the president of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR), former Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny. "He has become more a political actor than an actor in reconciliation," the paper quotes of the spokesperson of the organizations as saying at a press briefing yesterday in Abidjan. "Since his nomination, Banny has not shown any commitment to reconcile Ivoirians," Le Quotidien d'Abidjan (p. 6) also quotes the spokesperson as saying.

4. Seven wounded after fighting between rival student factions

A report in Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 7) says seven were wounded yesterday as two rival student factions clashed on the campus of Felix Houphouet Boigny University in Abidjan. The paper names the two factions as, "Syndicat de Eleves et Etudiants de Cote d'Ivoire (SYEECI)," and, "Federation Estudiantine et Scolaire de Cote d'Ivoire (FESCI)." The report also indicates that the clash came after students demonstrated on Monday to demand better conditions. In a related development, a report in Le Temps (p. 9) says the youth wing of the former ruling FPI party (JFPI) has expressed its support for the students' demands.

5. Channel 2 of state broadcaster now available nationwide

A report in L'Inter (p. 14) says RTI2, the channel of the state broadcaster that focuses on human interest stories and culture is now available nationwide. According to the paper, the coverage has become possible after an agreement signed between the RTI and Eutelsat, a satellite signal provider.

American Embassy's National Daily Press Review

May 16, 2013

Today's Top Stories

1. Media reacts to U.S. 2012 report on human rights in Cote d'Ivoire
2. Party of former president Bedie to contest 2015 presidential elections
3. Belgium businessmen to invest more in Cote d'Ivoire

1. Media reacts to U.S. 2012 report on human rights in Cote d'Ivoire

The 2012 report on the human rights situation in Cote d'Ivoire released yesterday in French by the U.S. Embassy in Abidjan features prominently in the Ivoirian press today. "The United States slams Ouattara," writes *Soir Info* (pp. 2-4), which quotes the report as accusing the government's Forces Republicaines de Cote d'Ivoire (FRCI) and Dozos, also known as traditional hunters, of "murder." The paper, which published the full report, also quotes the document on, "the difficult detention conditions," in which supporters of former Ivoirian president Laurent Gbagbo are being held. The paper also carries a front-page headline describing these accusations as "serious."

"A U.S. report on the human rights situation in Cote d'Ivoire accuses Ouattara," writes *L'Inter* (p. 6), which underlines part of the report that denounces "impunity" in Cote d'Ivoire. The report also features prominently in *Le Nouveau Courrier* (p. 5), which comments that through this report, "the United States is blowing hot and cold."

With a front-page headline reading, "The United States is unhappy," *Notre Voie* (p. 7), another daily close to the former ruling FPI party, quotes the report as, "accusing government forces of committing grave human rights violations in Cote d'Ivoire." By denouncing, "these serious wounds," perpetrated by the Ouattara's regime, comments the paper, the United States wanted to remind Ouattara that, "playtime is over."

Nord-Sud Quotidien (pp. 4&5), a daily close to the government, carries portions of the report underlining among other things, "corruption and lack of transparency in the government."

2. Party of former president Bedie to contest 2015 presidential elections

The political landscape in Cote d'Ivoire in the run-up to the 2015 presidential elections, and relations between President Ouattara's RDR party and his political ally, the PDCI party of former Ivoirian president Henri Konan Bedie, are also major issues in the press today. "PDCI will have a candidate in the 2015 presidential elections," *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 2) quotes the party's youth leader, Kouadio Konan Bertin, as saying yesterday at a press conference. According to the paper, Mr. Kouadio's declaration came as the party is preparing to hold a congress that will probably be dominated by the party's participation in the 2015 presidential vote. The paper (p. 4) however runs a comment wondering whether the announcement by Mr. Kouadio was, "a myth or reality."

In the wake of Mr. Kouadio declaration, *Le Temps* (p. 4), a daily close to the former ruling FPI party, proclaims a "divorce" between the RDR and PDCI parties, the two major parties in the ruling RHDP

coalition. "The alliance with the FPI party is possible," a report in Aujourd'hui (p. 5) quotes the PDCI's youth leader, who is also a member of the National Assembly, as saying. "The FPI party is not our enemy," L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 1) quotes Mr. Kouadio as saying, while a report in Le Mandat (p. 3), a daily close to the PDCI party, says the party's youth leader has set the record straight.

Notre Voie (p. 6) sees Mr. Kouadio's pronouncement on the relation between the RDR and PDCI as "a revolt against President Ouattara." Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 6) quotes the youth leader announcing the "death" of the ruling RHDP coalition. While Soir Info (p. 8) reports Mr. Kouadio telling cadres of PDCI members not to reject "calls from the FPI party for a new coalition against President Ouattara," Le Patriote (p. 3), a daily close to President Ouattara, describes the youth leader as, "a puppet," whose intention was to "bring down" the ruling alliance.

3. Belgium businessmen to invest more in Cote d'Ivoire

Belgian businessmen have shown interest in supporting Cote d'Ivoire to rehabilitate infrastructure such roads and bridges reports Fraternite Matin (p. 5). According to the paper, this discussion was held during a meeting between Belgium businessmen and President Ouattara during his visit to Brussels this week for a foreign donors' conference on Mali. The report also says that Belgium and Cote d'Ivoire have signed an agreement that seeks to promote and protect trade between the two countries.

With more on economic issues, a report in Fraternite Matin (p. 15) says the Ivoirian government and the International Financial Society, a World Bank institution, have signed a US \$2.4 million agreement that will help Cote d'Ivoire improve its business environment.

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 15, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

- 1. A bill to fight cyber criminality before the National Assembly**
- 2. Debate over electoral reform continues**

1. A bill to fight cyber criminality before the National Assembly

A report in *Fraternite Matin* (p. 10) says a bill seeking to fight cyber criminality in Cote d'Ivoire is a subject of debate at the Ivoirian National Assembly. The bill, which was submitted by the government also seeks, among other things, to protect data owned by individuals, reports the paper. The Minister of Post, Technologies, Information and Communication, Bruno Kone, who was speaking at the parliament session said: "Cote d'Ivoire has unfortunately become the den of cyber criminals." The minister also welcomed the decision by lawmakers to adopt the bill, and is reported as saying that when passed the law will help "secure telecommunication and information technology in Cote d'Ivoire."

A report in *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 3) says Ivoirian lawmakers unanimously adopted the bill on cyber criminality. The article also says that the new legislation will make cyber criminality a crime punishable by one to 20 years in prison.

Still on the same issue, a report in *L'Inter* (p. 2) says the bill on cyber criminality was adopted yesterday after a heated debate between lawmakers of President Alassane Ouattara's RDR party and those of the PDCI-RDA, the party of his ally Henri Konan Bedie.

2. Debate over electoral reform continues

An article in *Nord-Sud Quotidien* (p. 3) says Ivoirian civic groups are calling for the dissolution of the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI), the body that organized the last presidential, parliamentary and local elections in Cote d'Ivoire. According to the paper, the civic groups, which are speaking under the umbrella of Civic Society Organization (OSC), want the commission to be dissolved after the announcement of the final results of the recent regional and municipal elections. The organization has also urged the national Assembly "to facilitate a new electoral code" that would pave the way for the establishment of "a neutral and competent electoral commission."

While the Ivoirian Civic Society Organization is calling for the reform of the country's electoral commission, an article in *L'Inter* (p. 2) says the reorganization of the body that will be tasked with organizing the 2015 presidential elections in Cote d'Ivoire is "mandatory." The article claims that in view of the recent electoral disputes following the April 21 local elections, many political observers have decried the composition of the current electoral commission.

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 14, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

- 1. Security forces tear gas protesters at the country's major university**
- 2. RDR spokesperson says the ruling party tops the political landscape**

1. Security forces tear gas protesters at the country's major university

Angry students demonstrated yesterday against overcrowded classrooms, empty libraries and poor transportation at Felix Houphouet-Boigny University in Abidjan. The information made news in most dailies and was diversely commented upon. ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (pp. 6-7)** says the situation was heated as the demonstration coincided with an appearance on campus by Higher Education Minister Cisse Ibrahima Baongo, who was nearly assaulted by the angry mob. Wearing bandanas and carrying posters with slogans like "Baongo, Step Down" the students were dispersed by security forces which lobbed tear gas at the demonstrators. The demonstration, which witnesses said originally stemmed from a dead microphone during a lecture earlier in the morning at the law school, happened during a high-profile conference attended by Ivoirian first lady Dominique Ouattara and Chancellor Henriette Dagri, the paper added.

***Soir Info* (p. 10)** noted that the students said they are frustrated with hardships at the university which, despite extensive renovations, still lacks basic facilities and equipment. A police officer was injured during the incident, the paper adds. The paper also notes that the president of the university, Pr. Ly Ramata, has warned that the leaders of the demonstration will be expelled.

Opposition paper ***Notre Voie* (p. 6)** sees in the demonstration an act of exasperation towards the Ivoirian government which, the paper says, has tried unsuccessfully to silence social activists and opponents.

2. RDR spokesperson says the ruling party tops the political landscape

According to RDR spokesperson Joel Nguessan, the recent elections have confirmed the ruling party's rank as the major political party in the country. Speaking yesterday during a press conference, ***L'Inter* (p. 6)** notes that Mr. Nguessan argued his party has expanded the number of elected offices it holds in the west and south of the country to include major cities like Man, Duekoue, Oume, Aboisso and Adiake - prominent FPI and PDCI party strongholds in the past. This achievement, he added, is likely to secure the party's majority in mayoral councils nationwide. He also recommitted the RDR to advance the efforts to maintain the ruling RHDP coalition between the RDR and PDCI parties.

Le Patriote (p. 4) for its part said that in view of the new political landscape, the leadership of the RDR is to decide soon on changes within the party's organization.

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 13, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

- 1. President in Qatar for official visit**
- 2. Ivoirian authorities launch arms identification scheme**
- 3. Government forces ordered to leave public and private buildings**
- 4. President Ouattara's social cohesion scheme sparks criticism**
- 5. 14 Ivoirian students graduate from Georgia State University**

1. President in Qatar for official visit

A report in today's **Fraternite Matin (p. 4)** says authorities in Qatar have pledged to help Cote d'Ivoire become an emerging economy. According to the paper, they made the pledge yesterday as Ivoirian President Alassane Ouattara met with the Qatari authorities in Doha as part of his state visit to this country. President Ouattara said, "Our ambition is to make Cote d'Ivoire an emerging country by the year 2020. This will demand important resources and investments. The Emir of Qatar has pledged full support to enable us to finance investment programs."

With more on economic issues, a report in **La Matinale (p. 3)**, a daily close to the ruling RDR party, says China will invest in many projects aimed to help Cote d'Ivoire's goal to become an emerging economy. The paper reports that China announced last week a US \$24 million loan to Cote d'Ivoire to be used to finance projects including the rehabilitation of the Abidjan cultural center as well as the construction of a railway that will connect the port city of San Pedro in southwestern Cote d'Ivoire with Man in the west.

2. Ivoirian authorities launch arms identification scheme

An arms identification program designed to collect guns from former combatants in Cote d'Ivoire is underway, reports ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 8)**. According to the paper, the program was launched Friday in Abidjan by Fidele Sarassora, head of the Authority for Demobilization, Disarmament and Reinsertion (ADDR), the body in charge of helping former combatants give up their arms and rejoin society. It is expected that 1,400 different types of guns will be identified during this program, reports the paper, and that nearly 4,000 have been collected from other parts of the country so far.

3. Government forces ordered to leave public and private buildings

A report in ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 7)** says the minister in charge of defense has announced a large program aimed to remove elements of the government's Forces Republicaines de Cote d'Ivoire (FRCI) from private and public buildings they have occupied since the post-electoral conflict in 2011. The report quotes Mr. Koffi Koffi Paul as saying, "This illegal occupation is causing damage to the population and the squatters must leave private houses, government offices, schools, health centers and police stations."

4. President Ouattara's social cohesion scheme sparks criticism

The decision by President Ouattara to set up a National Program for Social Cohesion has triggered some criticism in opposition newspapers. According to ***Le Quotidien* (p. 2)**, the program was launched on Friday by the Ivoirian president almost two years after the debut of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR). This new program's objective is to "help heal scars" created in Cote d'Ivoire after the recent post-electoral conflict. However, the paper writes, "Ouattara stabs Banny at the back," quoting political observers as saying the launch of the new social cohesion program marks "the death" of the CDVR chaired by former Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny.

"The National Program for Social Cohesion ruins former prime minister's political ambitions," writes ***Aujourd'hui* (pp. 6&7)**, a daily close to the former ruling FPI party. The paper questions Mr. Banny's achievement so far as the head of the reconciliation effort and suggests that by creating a new commission to promote social cohesion in Cote d'Ivoire, President Ouattara is intentionally removing all potential threats to his run for reelection in 2015.

***Le Nouveau Courrier* (p. 5)** sees the creation of the commission as the beginning of what it describes as "a war" between President Ouattara and the head of the CDVR and predicts "a disgraceful exit" for Mr. Banny.

5. 14 Ivoirian students graduate from Georgia State University

Fourteen students from Cote d'Ivoire graduated from Georgia State University (GSU) in Atlanta, Georgia over the weekend, according to a report in ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 16)**. The students, who obtained their bachelor's degrees in various fields of study, were part of the exchange program between GSU and the International University of Grand-Bassam in Cote d'Ivoire.

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 10, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

- 1. Government announces electoral reforms ahead of 2015 presidential race**
- 2. RTI Director Lazare Aka to head newly-created government body**
- 3. Indian and Italian businessmen eye Ivoirian market for investment**
- 4. Speculation after former Ivoirian first lady Simone Gbagbo sent back to confinement in Odienne**

1. Government announces electoral reforms ahead of 2015 presidential race

According to an article in *Nord Sud Quotidien* (p. 5), the government has announced reforms within the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) ahead of the 2015 presidential election. The announcement, the paper says, was made Wednesday by government spokesperson Bruno Kone, who noted that the country's voter register will be updated. "The last elections were done within the framework of the 2003 Marcoussis Peace Agreement and now we need to update things to reflect changes that have occurred since 2010," the paper reports him as saying.

2. RTI Director Lazare Aka to head newly-created government body

The government this week announced, according to an article in *Le Nouveau Reveil* (p. 6), that Lazare Aka Saye, managing director of the state-run television channel RTI, has been appointed as chairman of the board of directors of a newly-created government agency in charge of radio frequencies, Agence Ivoirienne de Gestion des Fréquences (AIGF). *Le Patriote* (p. 11) says the new director of the government television station will be Ahmadou Bakayoko, who currently serves as the deputy director.

3. Indian and Italian businessmen eye Ivoirian market for investment

According to *Le Patriote* (p. 6), a delegation of Indian businessmen met yesterday in Abidjan with President Alassane Ouattara to discuss business opportunities in the country. During the meeting, the

Ivoirian leader committed to strengthening cooperation between India and Cote d'Ivoire and underscored the significant potential for investors in the agriculture and goods-processing sectors.

In a separate development, **L'Inter (p. 10)** noted that Italian investors are also interested in doing business in Cote d'Ivoire. As a result of a recent trip to Italy by Abidjan District Governor Robert Beugre Mambe, a delegation of Italian businessmen has decided to soon visit the country to assess business opportunities.

4. Speculation after former Ivoirian first lady Simone Gbagbo sent back to confinement in Odienne

Brought last week to a health care facility in Abidjan for treatment, Simone Gbagbo, the former Ivoirian first lady, was sent back yesterday to Odienne in northwestern Cote d'Ivoire where she has been detained since her arrest in April 2011. The information was reported by **Fraternite Matin (p. 8)** which noted that the government's decision to send her back to house arrest was fiercely criticized by the former ruling FPI party which denounced the move as an "inhumane abduction."

Papers close to the FPI echoed the complaint. **Le Temps (p. 5)** alleged that former first lady Gbagbo was still under anesthesia when FRCI soldiers removed her from her hospital bed. In a statement issued yesterday, FPI Secretary General Richard Kodjo condemned the government and warned about what he called, "a shocking disregard for the opposition and human rights."

Other opposition papers, including **Notre Voie (p. 4)**, **Le Nouveau Courrier (p. 4)** and **Le Quotidien d'Abidjan (p. 4)**, carried similar accounts.

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 8, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

- 1. Minister of Defense meets with partners over army reforms**
- 2. Ex-combatants return to normal life**
- 3. Controversy over President Ouattara's land and nationality reform plan**

4. Reaction to Human Right Watch report
5. Ambassador's travel upcountry
6. Partnership between EU and African, Caribbean countries

1. Minister of Defense meets with partners over army reforms

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 11)** says Ivoirian Minister of Defense Paul Koffi Koffi yesterday met with partners, including the Embassy of the United States, over plans underway for the reform of Cote d'Ivoire's national army. Speaking to the press after the meeting, the minister explained that the discussion focused on the mechanisms to be put in place in connection with the reform. The reforms, the minister is also reported as saying, will enable Cote d'Ivoire to have "a republican army" that an emerging country needs.

2. Ex-combatants return to normal life

A report in **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 5)** says more than 800 ex-combatants have returned to normal life through the assistance of the ADDR, a body overseeing the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in Cote d'Ivoire.

On the same issue, **L'Inter (p. 6)** says that the return to normal life of these ex-combatants comes a few weeks after they held demonstrations to protest their living conditions. According to the paper, the coordinator of the ADDR, Fidele Sarassora, used the occasion to urge the ex-combatants "to help create an atmosphere conducive for peace." He also called on those who still have guns to turn them in, reports the paper.

3. Controversy over President Ouattara's land and nationality reform plan

The recent announcement by President Alassane Ouattara that he intends to address the on-going land and nationality issues in Cote d'Ivoire through constitutional reforms has sparked commentary in the Ivoirian media. "Ouattara has his back to the wall," writes **L'Inter (p. 3)** which describes the plan as "audacious, perilous and courageous." The article suggests that the president, in his efforts to solve this problem once and for all, risks being accused of selling out the Ivoirian nationality.

After quoting President Ouattara as saying that "land and nationality issues are interrelated," **Soir Info (p. 2)** claims that through his reforms, the president will try to kill two birds with one stone. The paper speculates that the reforms, may provide nationality to stateless individuals thus making them eligible for full ownership rights to land.

"Land and nationality issues: Can Ouattara defuse the bombs?" writes **Le Mandat (p. 4)**. The paper further suggests that though Ivoirian political stakeholders unanimously recognize the necessity of addressing issues relating to land ownership and nationality in Cote d'Ivoire, the absence of opposition parties in the National Assembly could result in the approval of "inefficient laws" to resolve the problem.

While the debate of land and nationality issues continues, a report in **Notre Voie (p. 7)** says that conflict could arise between indigenous populations and burkinabe in western Cote d'Ivoire over land issues.

4. Reaction to Human Right Watch report

The reaction from the Ivoirian government following the publication of a report by Human Rights Watch on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire features prominently today in many Ivoirian dailies. **Le**

Nouveau Reveil (p. 3) publishes the full report in which the government reaffirms its intention to investigate allegations raised by Human Rights Watch's report. Meanwhile, an article in **Aujourd'hui (pp. 6&7)**, a daily close to the former ruling FPI party, describes the government's reaction as a stream of lies."

5. Ambassador's travel upcountry

Many Ivoirian dailies report on U.S. Ambassador Phillip Carter III's trips the eastern and western regions of Cote d'Ivoire. A report in **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 10)** says the ambassador recently visited health facilities funded by PEPFAR in Adzope, east of Abidjan. A report in **L'Inter (p. 2)** says Ambassador Carter on Monday met with the heads of the police services in the western town of Daloa.

6. Partnership between EU and African, Caribbean countries

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 16)** says the European Union has extended the deadline for the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) to enable [African, Caribbean and Pacific countries](#) to ratify the trade and development agreements. The economic partnership agreements are an economic arrangement that eliminates barriers to the free movement of goods, services, and investment between EU and [African, Caribbean and Pacific countries](#).

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 7, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

- 1. French firm to invest billions of CFA to boost energy production in Cote d'Ivoire**
 - 2. Opposition leader calls for unity against government**
 - 3. Rumors on cabinet reshuffle after local elections**
 - 4. Security: Minister of Defense meets disgruntled ex-combatants**
-
- 1. French firm to invest billions of CFA to boost energy production in Cote d'Ivoire**

A report in ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 16)** says French firm Bouygues will invest FCFA 500 billion (about US \$1 billion) to boost electricity production in Cote d'Ivoire. According to the paper, this was announced yesterday in Abidjan by the head of the firm, Martin Bouygues. As part of this project, the company will start working on two natural gas deposits discovered in 2005 and 2007 respectively in Cote d'Ivoire. This will help double the energy production capacity of two energy plants based in Abidjan. "We will be able to produce in the next ten years enough natural gas to enhance economic growth in Cote d'Ivoire," the paper quotes Mr. Bouygues as saying after talks with President Alassane Ouattara.

As part of the same story, ***Fraternite Matin*** quotes the head of the West African States Central Bank (BCEAO), Meyliet Tiemoko, as announcing, "despite the difficulties faced by countries in West Africa, economic growth in the region will increase by 6.5 percent." Mr. Tiemoko, who was speaking after a meeting with President Ouattara, was optimistic about the trend in Cote d'Ivoire which he said, "will remain the engine of the region with nine percent growth."

2. Opposition leader calls for unity against government

A report in ***Soir Info* (p. 4)** says the leader of the opposition Liberty and Democracy for the Republic (LIDER) party, Mamadou Koulibaly, is calling on other Ivoirian opposition group to join together to form a coalition against the government. The paper quotes Mr. Koulibaly as saying, "This opposition coalition, if organized, could fight for an electoral list and transparent elections," and could also "counter anybody who uses money or guns to corrupt or to take power,"

***L'Inter* (p. 2)**, which also reports on Mr. Koulibaly's message for a strong opposition, says the president of LIDER was speaking yesterday at a press conference where he announced his proposals for a "better Cote d'Ivoire." He also said that the opposition coalition he is calling for will fight, "for a new Constitution that will give more powers to a National Assembly that will not be a puppet of the president of the republic."

3. Rumors on cabinet reshuffle after local elections

The rumors of a possible cabinet reshuffle after the recent local elections are one the major issues in the Ivoirian press today. An article in ***L'Inter* (p.3)** speculates on the ministers most likely to leave the government. According to the paper, President Ouattara, during his recent trip to the western region of the country, talked about the issue saying, "I will consult with the Prime Minister on decisions to make." The article also suggests that some members of the government, elected to other seats during the local elections, may leave the government to serve in their new posts.

4. Security: Minister of Defense meets disgruntled ex-combatants

A report in ***Fraternite Matin* (p. 7)** says Minister of Defense Paul Koffi Koffi met this week with ex-combatants. According to the paper, the minister was speaking in the central town of Bouake where some disgruntled former fighters protested two weeks ago to demand better living conditions. The paper reports the ex-combatants as saying that they have been abandoned after fighting for the

liberation of the country. According to the paper, the minister said, "The ex-combatants cannot use arms to disrupt the public order," and reassured that, "The ongoing disarmament program is designed to address their situation." A report in ***Soir Info (p. 6)*** says the minister has also called on the former combatants "to lay down their guns and to sit down to negotiate."

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 6, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

- 1. Ivoirian President Ouattara speaks on variety of topics during travels**
- 2. Supporters of former president accused of crimes**
- 3. Ivoirian journalists' network marks World Press Freedom Day**

1. Ivoirian President Ouattara speaks on variety of topics during travels

President Alassane Ouattara's press briefing on a variety of topics including human rights, a possible cabinet reshuffle, land ownership and the high costs of living during his trip to the western region of Cote d'Ivoire is the major issue in many Ivoirian dailies today. "This year, we will find a solution to nationality and land issues," **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 3)** quotes President Ouattara as saying. According to the president, the government is working on "how to reinforce" the current law on land ownership. The president also told reporters that Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan will, by October of this year, bring a bill on land reform before the National Assembly. "Land ownership is also linked to the issue of nationality which is yet to be solved," the paper also quotes President Ouattara as saying.

Responding to a question relating to the high cost of living in Cote d'Ivoire, President Ouattara said the government's economic reforms and reconstruction programs are aimed at "improving the living condition" in this country, reports **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 4)**.

On security issues, **Le Patriote (p. 2)** quotes President Ouattara as saying, "we have deployed important means to secure the western region of the country." In a related development, a report in **Soir Info (p. 4)** says the president announced that approximately 200 soldiers, who have sought refuge in Togo since the 2011 post-electoral crisis, will soon return home.

Reports in the weekend issues of the Ivoirian press also said President Ouattara used his visit to the region to talk about electoral reforms aimed at preventing fraud and violence in the 2015 presidential elections. "For the coming elections we will go for electronic vote like in France and the United States," **Nord-Sud Quotidien (p. 3)** quotes the president as saying.

While **Fraternite Matin (p. 5)** reports the president claiming that the electronic vote will help prevent people from "rigging and destroying ballot boxes," an article in **Le Nouveau Courier (p. 4)** suggests that the president's intention to introduce the electronic vote into the Ivoirian electoral system could be part of plans "to rig" the elections.

On a similar tone, a report in **Aujourd'hui (p. 6)**, a daily close to the former ruling FPI party, describes as "bombs" President Ouattara's intention to propose reforms aiming resolving the land and nationality issues in Cote d'Ivoire. The article claims that, as the president's RDR party holds the majority in Parliament, the president will not encounter any obstacles, "to adopt the bill that will allow people coming from outside to acquire land certificates just as native Ivoirians can do."

According to **Notre Voie (pp. 2&3)**, the economic reforms being implemented by the president since he assumed power was the major issue at a press conference held Saturday by the former ruling FPI party in response to the president. During the gathering, the party's leadership decried the president's "huge debt policy" which it says could, "compromise the future of the next generation" of people in Cote d'Ivoire.

2. Supporters of former president accused of crimes

The fate of the supporters of former Ivoirian president Laurent Gbagbo, who have been detained for alleged crimes committed during the 2011 post-electoral crisis, is the subject of a prominent story in **L'Inter (p. 2)**. According to the paper, the government will speed up court procedures in order to enable several detainees to be freed. Meanwhile, a report in the weekend issue of **Le Patriote (p.3)** says the supporters of the former president, who are being detained, will soon appear in court.

3. Ivoirian journalists' network marks World Press Freedom Day

A report in **Fraternite Matin (p. 27)** says Ivoirian journalists gathered on Saturday to mark this year's World Press Freedom Day. The event was marked by a peaceful march through the streets of Abidjan and a conference on, "Freedom of the Press and the Responsibilities of Journalists."

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 3, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

1. **On a visit to the west, President Ouattara says recent mayoral and regional elections showed steps toward democracy**
2. **Two soldiers from the Ivoirian army to serve terms in prison in connection with manslaughter case**
3. **Former Ivoirian first lady Simone Gbagbo evacuated to Abidjan for medical treatment**

1. On a visit to the west, President Ouattara says recent mayoral and regional elections showed steps toward democracy

President Alassane Ouattara kicked off Wednesday a four-day visit to western Cote d'Ivoire. The visit was covered extensively in pro-government papers, especially *Fraternite Matin* (pp. 4-9). According to the daily, the Ivoirian leader chaired a cabinet meeting yesterday in Man. "Together with the prime minister, we have decided to have similar decentralized meetings to remain close to the people and better assess their needs," the paper reported the president as saying. The daily also noted that the Ivoirian leader said he remains upbeat about development perspectives for the region.

On the margins of an address in Biakouman earlier yesterday, President Ouattara argued that the recent mayoral and regional elections show that the country has made strides toward democracy and that the poll was overall peaceful and fair. "I call on all candidates who lost to concede their defeat and avoid the use of violence," he reportedly said, adding that the relatively large number of independent bidders in these elections was an obvious sign of a thriving democracy in the country.

Still on the issue, *Le Patriote* (p. 2) said the Ivoirian leader also warned the newly elected mayors and "conseillers regionaux" to avoid engaging in mismanagement and embezzlements. "You will be held accountable and brought to justice should this happen," the paper reported President Ouattara as saying.

2. Two soldiers from the Ivoirian army to serve terms in prison in connection with manslaughter case

According to *L'Inter* (p. 3) a military court in Abidjan sentenced yesterday military members Amara Doumbia and Daouda Bazemon to ten and seven year terms in prison respectively after both soldiers were found guilty of opening fire and deliberately killing demonstrators in the town of Vavoua last year. The two soldiers are said to be close to Commandant Kone Zakaria, the leader of an elite unit of the Ivoirian military police, the paper added.

3. Former Ivoirian first lady Simone Gbagbo evacuated to Abidjan for medical treatment

Former Ivoirian first lady Simone Gbagbo was evacuated yesterday from a prison in Odienne to a health care facility in Abidjan. *Le Quotidien d'Abidjan* (p. 4) said the former first lady, because of a "serious health condition" was brought to Abidjan in a UN aircraft. She has been under house arrest in Odienne since her capture in April 2011.

L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 3) said her evacuation came after her lawyers submitted a request to the government to allow her to receive appropriate medical treatment.

AMERICAN EMBASSY'S NATIONAL DAILY PRESS REVIEW

MAY 2, 2013

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Today's Top Stories

- 1. President Ouattara visits war-torn western region of Cote d'Ivoire**
- 2. Ivoirian workers demand better working conditions on May Day**
- 3. Ivoirian journalists' network unveils program for World Press Freedom Day**

1. President Ouattara visits war-torn western region of Cote d'Ivoire

President Alassane Ouattara's visit to the war-torn western region of Cote d'Ivoire, a few days after having announced his intention to seek reelection in the 2015 presidential election, is the major issue in the Ivoirian press today. A report in **Le Nouveau Reveil (p. 8)** quotes Minister of Planning and Development Albert Toikeusse Mabri as saying, "The president is not in the western region in search of an electorate. The west suffered from the war and the president knows that there is a need to restore peace in the region."

With more on the reason behind his visit to the west, **L'Intelligent d'Abidjan (p. 6)** quotes President Ouattara as saying, "I am here to make sure that our goals have been accomplished." Speaking yesterday in Man on his arrival in the region, the president said: "I am here to see to the development of this region that has suffered a lot." Reporting on the president's visit to the western region **Fraternite Matin (p. 8)** says that issues pertaining to the development and reconstruction of the region will be high on the president's agenda.

2. Ivoirian workers demand better working conditions on May Day

Reports in today's paper say Ivoirian workers used the celebration of May Day yesterday to voice their grievances and demand better working conditions. An article in **Aujourd'hui (p. 8)**, a daily close to the former ruling FPI party, says members of trade unions, which gathered for the celebration, decried the rate of unemployment in Cote d'Ivoire.

"Workers voiced their misery," as they met yesterday with Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan, reports **Notre Voie**. In a related story, a report in **L'Inter (p. 11)** says UGTIC, Cote d'Ivoire's General Workers Union, has called on employers to apply the convention that sets the guaranteed minimum wage to FCFA 60,000 (US \$120) per month.

3. Ivoirian journalists' network unveils program for World Press Freedom Day

A report in ***L'Intelligent d'Abidjan* (p. 12)** says Cote d'Ivoire's Journalists Network (UNJCI) will be organizing a series of activities on May 4 to mark this year's World Press Freedom Day. According to the paper, activities will include panel discussions on issues such as "freedom of expression and responsibility," "how to reinforce freedom of expression in Cote d'Ivoire" and "The responsibility of women in promoting freedom of expression."

A related article in ***Notre Voie* (p. 7)** expresses concerns about the state of press freedoms in Cote d'Ivoire. Listing examples of the detention and harassment of journalists as well as the suspension of print outlets, the paper accuses authorities of targeting the press in the past.

Media affiliation and circulation

| | | |
|---|--|--------|
| Fratemite Matin | State-owned daily newspaper | 23,000 |
| L'Intelligent d'Abidjan | Privately-owned daily, leans pro-President Alassane Ouattara | 7,000 |
| L'Inter | Independent daily | 20,000 |
| Le Nouveau Courrier | Daily close to the FPI, the party of Former President Laurent Gbagbo | 10,000 |
| Le Nouveau Reveil | Daily close to the PDCI-RDA, the party of Former President Henri Konan Bedie | 17,000 |
| Le Patriote | Daily close to the RDR, the party of President Alassane Ouattara | 17,000 |
| Le Temps (no current website) | Daily close to the FPI, the party of Former President Laurent Gbagbo | 30,000 |
| Nord-Sud Quotidien (no current website) | Daily close to the Speaker of the National Assembly Guillaume Soro | 10,000 |
| Notre Voie | Daily close to the FPI, the party of Former President Laurent Gbagbo | 15,000 |
| Soir Info | Independent daily | 22,000 |
| Agence Ivoirienne de Presse | Public News Agency | |
| RTI TV | Public Television | |

NOTE: Newspaper circulation figures represent the number of copies printed, not actual sales.